

**Abstract 210**

**TITLE:** Capacity Building for HIV Prevention: Partnering with the African-American Faith Community

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**ISSUE:** A disproportionate number of African-Americans are infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. HIV prevention to selected African-American at-risk can be delivered through the faith: community.

**SETTING:** REACH OUT, Inc. is a faith-based agency in Central Florida headed by Pastor Jean Payton. Pastor Payton realized the need for HIV prevention targeted to underserved African-Americans in her community and established services in collaboration with Orange County Health Department (OCHD).

**PROJECT:** OCHD provided basic HIV prevention education (including certification for HIV counseling and testing) to the pastor and her staff and funding for culturally-specific HIV prevention literature, outreach workers, and the development of a food bank for people living with HIV/AIDS. This collaboration assisted REACH OUT in obtaining additional funding through Ryan White monies to expand services to the African-American community. This year, the project received additional funding to sub-contract with two other agencies to provide HIV prevention services to the African-American community. This presentation will outline the steps taken regarding this collaboration and describe the program in more detail, including the agency's commitment to the underserved and responsibility to address HIV prevention in an African-American community challenged with poverty and subsequent poor health care outcomes.

**RESULTS:** A notable number of African-Americans has received services through REACH OUT, Inc. The presentation will include a description of the people who received services, including people who received services through outreach, what services were received, and clients' opinions of services.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** A faith-based program for HIV prevention is effective in reaching selected African-American communities. Collaborations between health departments and faith organizations can result in increased access to HIV prevention services to targeted groups.

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